BRITISH COLUMBIA
The Best Place on Earth

2007-05829/

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2007FOR0051-000508
April 24, 2007

Ministry of Forests and Range
BC Timber Sales

BC TIMBER SALES PURSUES SAFE COMPANY CERTIFICATION

VICTORIA – In its commitment to improve safety for forest workers, the BC Timber Sales program has registered with the BC Forest Safety Council, marking its intention to achieve SAFE Companies certification within six months.

"As the province's largest public land manager, BC Timber Sales has made safety an overriding principle in its activities," said Forests and Range Minister Rich Coleman. "This move towards certification is an important step in meeting the Province's commitment to improve safety for all those who work in our forests."

Under its new safety program, all BC Timber Sales fieldwork contracts advertised after April 1, 2007 require operators to be registered with the BC Forest Safety Council. All employers working on fieldwork contracts, such as road building or silviculture, must be registered.

In addition, all timber sales licences advertised by BCTS after April 1, 2007 require all persons or companies working on a timber sales licence to be registered in the SAFE Companies program, which signals its intent to be certified within six months.

"BC Timber Sales is promoting safe worksites and safety improvements," said Coleman. "This step and other actions across the industry are helping create a culture of safety and helping ensure workers arrive home safely at the end of the day."

The SAFE Companies program of the BC Forest Safety Council provides registrants with clear, practical standards so they can establish and maintain successful health and safety programs that fit their needs. To date, over 1,000 forest licensees in B.C. have voluntarily applied for SAFE Companies certification.

As part of the Province's forest safety commitment, BC Timber Sales and the Ministry of Forests and Range continue to work closely with the BC Forest Safety Council and WorkSafeBC on a wide range of operational and policy issues aimed at improving worker safety.

-30-

Media contact: Jennifer McLarty
Public Affairs Officer
250 387-4592

For more information on government services or to subscribe to the Province's news feeds using RSS, visit the Province's website at www.gov.bc.ca.